

August 1, 2008

The Honorable Mary Peters  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C.  
20590



230 EAST TOWN STREET  
P.O. BOX 15159  
COLUMBUS, OH 43215-0159  
614.228.4201 800.622.1893  
614.228.6403 FAX

[www.ohiochamber.com](http://www.ohiochamber.com)  
[occ@ohiochamber.com](mailto:occ@ohiochamber.com)

Dear Secretary Peters,

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and our over 4,000 statewide business members, we are writing in support of Continental Airlines' application to the Department of Transportation to enter into an alliance relationship with United and other members of the Star Alliance. Continental has been an integral part of the Ohio economy for many years and approval of these proposed agreements will help ensure Continental's long-term competitiveness and strengthen their presence in Ohio.

As I am sure you are aware, fundamental industry change is necessary due to the unprecedented financial crisis the airline industry faces, and we support Continental's decision to remain an independent airline and to continue providing its award-winning service as a member of the Star Alliance. What Continental wants is a way to become a more global competitor and to achieve additional network reach without merging: joining the Star Alliance's anti-trust immunity; seeking enhanced cooperation with Air Canada, Lufthansa and United with a trans-Atlantic joint venture; and offering the domestic consumer wide-ranging benefits via code sharing, frequent flyer and airport lounge reciprocity with United Airlines in the U.S. These new relationships will mean that Cleveland's businesses and traveling public will have better access to more destinations worldwide, a greater inventory of seats, more route possibilities and we believe even more price options.

Today Continental's Cleveland hub provides a regional competitive balance and a shift to the Star Alliance will help maintain this critical balance.

We urge you to approve Continental's application to participate in anti-trust immunity previously granted to nine other carriers in the Alliance; to develop a competitive joint venture with Air Canada, United and Lufthansa and to cooperate in the domestic market with United Airlines. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew E. Doehrel  
President & CEO  
Ohio Chamber of Commerce